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(Original Signature of Member)

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to establish a grant program to assist innovative natural disaster first responder programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to establish a grant program to assist innovative natural disaster first responder programs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “First Responder Inno-
5 vation and Support Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM.**

2 Title II of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
3 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131 et seq.) is
4 amended by adding at the end the following:

5 **“SEC. 205. FIRST RESPONDER INNOVATION AND SUPPORT**
6 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The President may make grants
8 to eligible entities to assist innovative natural disaster first
9 responder programs in accordance with this section.

10 “(b) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant under
11 this section, an eligible entity shall submit an application
12 to the President. Such application shall include, at a min-
13 imum, a description of each of the following:

14 “(1) The purpose for which the grant is sought
15 and the reason Federal assistance is needed for such
16 purpose.

17 “(2) The innovation with respect to natural dis-
18 aster first responders to be achieved with the grant.

19 “(3) The plans, if any, of the eligible entity to
20 allocate amounts from the grant to local govern-
21 ments and federally recognized Indian tribes.

22 “(4) A budget for the expected expenditure of
23 the grant amounts.

24 “(c) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The President shall
25 issue regulations establishing selection criteria for making

1 grants under this section. Such criteria shall include con-
2 sideration of the following:

3 “(1) The severity and frequency of natural dis-
4 asters that affect the eligible entity applying for the
5 grant.

6 “(2) Whether existing natural disaster first re-
7 sponder systems would be improved by the grant.

8 “(3) Whether the grant would provide natural
9 disaster first responder support for special popu-
10 lations, including children, pregnant women, the el-
11 derly, and the disabled.

12 “(4) Whether the activity assisted by the grant
13 is sustainable with non-Federal amounts after such
14 grant is made.

15 “(d) TIMING AND NUMBER OF GRANTS.—The Presi-
16 dent shall make grants under this section annually and
17 an eligible entity may apply for multiple grants under this
18 section each year. An eligible entity is not limited in the
19 number of grants such entity may receive under this sec-
20 tion.

21 “(e) COMPETITIVE BASIS.—The President shall
22 make grants under this section on a competitive basis sub-
23 ject to the requirements of this section.

1 “(f) REGULATIONS.—Not later than one year after
2 the date of enactment of this section, the President shall
3 issue regulations necessary to carry out this section.

4 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following
5 definitions apply:

6 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
7 tity’ means any of the 50 States, the District of Co-
8 lumbia, any federally recognized Indian tribe, and
9 any territory or possession of the United States that
10 has an approved mitigation plan under section 322.

11 “(2) FIRST RESPONDER.—The term ‘first re-
12 sponder’ means an individual who in the early stages
13 of an incident is responsible for the protection and
14 preservation of life, property, evidence, and the envi-
15 ronment, including emergency response providers (as
16 such term is defined under section 2 of the Home-
17 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101)) and
18 emergency management, public health, clinical care,
19 public works, and other skilled support personnel,
20 including equipment operators, that provide imme-
21 diate support services during prevention, response,
22 and recovery operations.

23 “(3) NATURAL DISASTER.—The term ‘natural
24 disaster’ has the meaning given such term under
25 section 602.

1 “(4) PRESIDENT.—The term ‘President’ means
2 the President, acting through the Administrator of
3 the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

4 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 is authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry
6 out this section \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010
7 through 2015. Such sums shall remain available until ex-
8 ended.”.